

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Commission
December 15, 2010
11:00 a.m.

James R. Thompson Center
Murdock Room - IDHS
Suite 5-300
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioners

In Chicago

Martin R. Castro, Chairman
Sakhawat Hussain, M.D.
David Chang
Robert Enriquez
Spencer Leak, Sr.
Munir Muhammad
Rozanne Ronen

Absent

Marti Baricevic
Charles E. Box
Nabi Fakroddin, P.E., S.E.
Marylee V. Freeman
Gregory Simoncini
Diane M. Viverito

Staff

N. Keith Chambers
Reva Bauch
Dr. Ewa I. Ewa
Michael J. Evans
Harriet Parker
Donyelle L. Gray
Evelio Mora
Christine Welninski

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Members of Public: None

NOTICE:

Public meetings and closed meetings of the Illinois Human Rights Commission are audio recorded.

I. Call to Order

On December 15, 2010, at 11:00 a.m., Chairman Martin R. Castro called to order a meeting of the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq., it was determined that:

- 1) A quorum of the public body was not present because the following Commissioners were absent: Commissioners Baricevic, Box, Freeman, Nabi, Muhammad, Simoncini, and Viverito.
- 2) Prior to the meeting, Commissioners Baricevic, Box, Freeman, Nabi, Simoncini, and Viverito gave notice (and good cause as defined by the Illinois Open Meetings Act) to the General Counsel and Secretary of the Public Body, Harriet Parker, that each would be unable to be physically present at today's meeting. Commissioner Simoncini stated if feasible he would participate via the telephone. However, Commissioner Simoncini was unable to participate via the telephone.
- 3) Commissioner Muhammad joined the meeting at approximately 11:18 a.m.

II. Consideration of Minutes

November 17, 2010

At 11:18 a.m. Commissioner Muhammad arrived and a quorum of the public body was established. The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2010, meeting as submitted by staff. Motion to approve the minutes made by Commissioner Leak and seconded by Commissioner Hussain. Motion carried 7-0.

III. Staff Reports

A. N. Keith Chambers, Executive Director

Mr. Chambers announced that the Interagency Agreement between the Illinois Torture, Inquiry and Relief Commission ("Torture Commission") and the HRC has been fully executed.

Mr. Chambers stated he continues to monitor all new legislation during this Legislative veto session. Mr. Chambers stated the Diversity Dinner is being planned for October 2011. The FY 2010 Annual Report has been sent for translation into Spanish and Polish.

B. Dr. Ewa I. Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer

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Chief Fiscal Officer Ewa reported the Budget Office will be requiring all Agencies to justify their budget via zero based budgeting. Dr. Ewa also shared that the Governor has appointed a new Chief of Staff, Jack Lavin. Dr. Ewa stated the Commission plans to request \$250,000 from GOMB to cover the cost of union related salary increases. Dr. Ewa and Mr. Chambers stated that due to the large increase in Request for Reviews in the General Counsel's Office, the Commission plans to request approval to hire an additional Assistant General Counsel and Administrative Assistant in addition to an additional Administrative Law Judge for the AL Section.

Dr. Ewa reported that Springfield Commission Office staff member Debbie Lowe has requested medical leave effective immediately which has been approved. Dr. Ewa is working with CMS to identify a replacement for Ms. Lowe.

Chairman Castro requested an update regarding the Commission's plan to quantify the fair housing cases in order to claim the \$100,000 in federal monies earmarked for such cases. Dr. Ewa reported that he had submitted 5 cases received from ALJ Evans, to CMS for payment approval. CMS responded by sending to Dr. Ewa a generated "bill" for more than \$7,000.00 for the 5 cases for submission to the Comptroller. Dr. Ewa says if the Comptroller approves this bill for payment the Commission will continue to submit billing related to fair housing cases to the Comptroller's Office. Commissioner Hussain observed that the Commission should have far more than 5 cases to submit, and suggested that Request for Review cases be included in the fair housing cases submitted for payment approval. It was agreed Ms. Parker will forward fair housing related Request for Review cases to Dr. Ewa. Dr. Ewa stated that he will continue to work on ways to quantify fair housing cases.

C. Michael J. Evans, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Chief ALJ Evans reported there was an increase in window case filings. The increase may be attributed to reduced investigators in the Illinois Department of Human Rights. However, because of the December Holiday season activity in the AL Section has been slow.

D. Harriet J. Parker, General Counsel

General Counsel Parker discussed the total number of Freedom of Information Act Requests received through November 2010, and discussed the Request for Review statistics for November 2010. Ms. Parker shared that five candidates for Spring 2011, Coles Fellowships have been scheduled for interviews. Mr. Parker shared that the Office of the General Counsel continues to provide substantial support to the Torture Commission via minutes drafting, publication of agendas, minutes and calendar onto the HRC's website, and by providing information and guidance regarding State of Illinois Rules and Procedures.

Ms. Parker screened a short documentary produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center, entitled *Bullied*. *Bullied* exposes the harrowing physical and mental abuse of Jamie Nabozny during his middle school and High School years, at the hands of his fellow students, and School Administrators because of his sexual orientation. As an adult Mr. Nabozny successfully sued his former tormentors and won justice not only for himself but for countless young gay and lesbian students throughout the country. Commissioner Muhammad left prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

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IV. Unfinished Business

A. Community Outreach

Chairman Castro announced plans continue for a Community Outreach Meeting in the Suburban Hispanic Community for early 2011.

B. Diversity Dinner

The Diversity Dinner report was discussed in Mr. Chambers' report.

C. FY 2008-2009 Translated Annual Report

The FY 2008-2009 Translated Annual Report was discussed during Mr. Chambers' report.

D. Holiday Party

Chairman Castro announced that the Holiday Party follows after the En banc meeting.

V. New Business

A. FY 2010 Annual Report Translations (Spanish/Polish)

Translation of the FY2010 Annual Report into Spanish and into Polish was discussed during Mr. Chambers' report.

VI. Executive Session

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 a.m. Motion made by Commissioner Hussain with a second by Commissioner Enriquez. Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Harriet Parker
General Counsel